

Decatur County Council Meeting

Tuesday, April 20, 2021, Room 106

Present: Kenny Hooten, Ernie Gauck, Deanna Burkart, Danny Peters, Bill Metz, Melanie Nobbe and Larry Meyer

President Peters called the April 20th, 2021 meeting of the Decatur County Council to order. **County Treasurer Diane Wenning** led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

(Meeting minutes and agendas are emailed to Council members the Friday before their Tuesday meeting)

Mr Meyer moved to approve the March 16th meeting minutes and Mr Metz seconded the motion. Motion passes, 6 – 0. Minutes are approved.

Adina Roberts, Clerk of the Courts, asked for the Council's blessing/permission to create a Vote Centers' study committee, in hopes of going forward in giving voters the option to vote outside of their precincts on Primary and Election Days. Absentee voting will still take place at the Courthouse and maybe satellite locations. In addition to elected officials, each party chairman would appoint a person to the committee. Mr Metz moved to allow the study group and Mrs Burkart seconded the motion. Motion passes, 6 – 0.

Judge Tim Day, Prosecutor Nate Harter and Sheriff Dave Durant shared some information on the 3 minors, who have been charged as adults, currently being held in the Detention Center. These 3 must be housed separately due to their age, but they can still hear what's going on with the adult inmates. The only alternative would be to house them in either **Johnson County Juvenile** facility or one in **Muncie** which costs \$140 per day per person. Judge Day said one-half of his budget for juvenile detention has been spent and its only April. It could cost up to \$35,000 to house all 3 in a juvenile facility up to their trial dates. Judge Day isn't asking for the Council to decide today, but on December 21, 2021 juveniles will no longer be permitted to be housed in an adult facility unless they would have no interaction-sight or sound- with adult inmates whatsoever. Sheriff Durant said a new facility is being built in Hancock County and the Sheriff said no juveniles will be housed in that facility, mainly due to liability. He told Council it's okay for now as we have it. Judge Day said this is just a 'heads up' and we'll continue doing what we're doing until we can't.

Pam Nobbe, speaking on behalf of Judge Matt Bailey who is in a jury trial, told Council the recording equipment in the Superior Court is no longer working. It is a **Windows 7** based and the current court software (voice, video and data capture), needs at least a **Windows 10**. Mrs Nobbe presented a quote from **Word Systems LLC** for \$8,308 and asked Council to advertise this request for an additional for their May meeting.

Communications Director Erika Free requested the pay rate for her part-time help be restored to the \$14 an hour as it has been since 2016; also, to retro-active the increase back to the employee's hire date. There are sufficient funds in her budget to cover this increase. Mrs Burkart moved to approve the hourly rate at \$14 an hour effective as of this employee's hire date as requested. Mr Hooten seconded the motion. Motion passes, 6 – 0.

Resolution 2021-5 was previously emailed to Council members for their review before today's meeting. As the County Commissioners are interested in purchasing 43.052 acres of land, at 770 South County Road 200 West, to relocate the County Highway Department, the County Council is required to pass a resolution in accordance with Indiana Code 36-1-10.5-5. Mr Metz moved to approve Resolution 2021-5 and Mr Gauck seconded the motion. Motion passes, 6 – 0.

Mr Hooten moved to approve the request for \$400,000 in additional monies, in Cumulative Bridge, for Bridge #239- Washington Street in Greensburg. Mr Meyer seconded the motion. Motion passes, 6 – 0. **Highway Superintendent Mark Mohr** has estimated the costs to hire **USI** to do design work on that

bridge. Mr Mohr also asked Council to approve the **Amended 144- Statement of Salaries and Wages-** for the Highway mechanic who also does some building maintenance and he would really like to retain him. Mr Metz move to allow the hourly pay increase to \$20.64 and Mr Gauck seconded the motion. Motion passes, 6 – 0. Mr Meyer moved to approve the request of \$1313.24 for bridge inspections. Mrs Burkart seconded the motion. Motion passes, 6 – 0. The Highway Department pays the full amount, State then reimburses on an 80/20 split.

Council discussed the \$280,000 request for CARES Act monies by Rex McKinney of Decatur County Memorial Hospital. Decatur County received over \$800,000 as reimbursement for monies spent due to the COVID pandemic and it was receipted into County General as stipulated by the State Board of Accounts. County General’s cash balance is \$291,458.80; so Council members are not comfortable with approving this request at this time. Fund cash balances normally are low at time of the year; once the Spring Tax Settlement is complete, there should be a healthy balance to revisit the request for additional monies. Mr Metz moved to table the \$280,000 request by DCMH until after the tax draw and Mr Gauck seconded the motion. Motion passes, 6 – 0.

Mr Gauck moved to approve Sheriff Durant’s request to use \$25,000 of Commissary monies to pay his employees a one-time COVID hazard pay of \$500 each in December, 2021. Mrs Nobbe seconded the motion. Motion carries, 6 – 0. Sheriff Durant also told Council members he plans to purchase a lawn mower so his maintenance person can mow the Detention Center’s grass.

Mr Hooten moved to approve a request to transfer monies in the Preparedness Grant Fund and Mr Meyer seconded the motion. Motion carries, 6 – 0.

Economic Development Commission Director Bryan Robbins shared news that Decatur County has been awarded a \$225,000 grant to be used for grants for small businesses to apply for.

The **County Redevelopment Commission’s 2020 Annual Report** was received and reviewed by County Council members.

County Commissioner Mark Koors asked for the Council’s opinion on demolishing the old jail as the County has spent about \$50,000 for utilities and upkeep on it. Commissioners plan to advertise for bids to remove that building. Council is okay to remove the old jail.

The Council’s next meeting will be at 9:00 am on May 18th, in Room 106.

With nothing else to come before the Council, Mr Hooten moved to adjourn and Mr Gauck seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned.

Danny Peters, President

Attest: _____

Date: _____